

Absecon Lighthouse
Pacific Avenue between Rhode Island Avenue and Vermont Ave.
Atlantic City
Atlantic County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-734

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE New Jersey	COUNTY Atlantic County	TOWN OR VICINITY Atlantic City
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Absecon Lighthouse		HABS NO. NJ-734
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE Absecon Lighthouse		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) Pacific Avenue between Rhode Island and Vermont Avenues		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1855-1857	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Lt. George G. Meade, Engineer	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) The lighthouse was constructed by the United States government after a number of tragic shipwrecks in the vicinity of Absecon Beach were attributed to lack of navigational signals. The beam is higher above sea level than any other light on the New Jersey Coast, except the (see page 2)		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Built on a stone foundation		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) The tower is circular in plan & rises to a height of 171 feet above city grade. It has 3 major levels: the ground floor, the storage room beneath the lens and the lens chamber (see page 2)		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) An iron newel staircase (spiral) extends from the ground floor to the storage room and is interrupted by landings every 20 feet. A narrow winder stair provides access to the lens chamber. The storage room floor and exterior catwalk are supported by a band of 10 large stone brackets (see p.2)		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES 1910 mineral oil lamps changed to incandescent oil vapor lamps 1925 electric lamps installed 1964 renovated		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Good condition; now used as a museum.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE Historical maps and engineering drawings indicate that the shore line was originally quite close to the base of the tower.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Butler, Frank. <u>Book of the Boardwalk</u> , 1953 Boucher, Jack E. "Absecon Yesteryear", 1963 Atlantic City's Historic Absecon Lighthouse N.J.: Atlantic City Historical Society, 1964 Carneseworth. <u>History of Atlantic City</u> , 1869 (cont'd p.2)		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Eleni Silverman, HABS		DATE August 1983

SIGNIFICANCE (Continued from page 1):

Twin Highland's Lights.

SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (Continued from page 1):

itself. The stone foundations are approximately 8' deep.

INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (Continued from page 1):

(cyma-reversa profile) and the narrow interior and exterior catwalks of the lens chamber are supported by a band of 12 small iron brackets. Iron mullions secure the rectangular glass panes enclosing the lens chamber and also serve structurally to support the metal, 12-panel, pyramidal roof. The lighthouse lens is classified as a "Fresnel Lens of the first order," and is 6 feet in diameter at the focal plane, tapering 2 feet in diameter at the top. A 12-inch vent stack extends from the top of the lens through the peak of the roof. The original mineral oil lamp was mounted on a circular platform at the center of the lens.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Continued from page 1):

English A. "History of Atlantic City", 1884
Heston, A.M. "Annals of Eyren Haven," 1904